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Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

Letter dated 21 October 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Final Declaration of the Seventh Forum of Cuban Civil Society against the Embargo, adopted in Havana on 20 October 2010 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this note and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly under agenda item 41.

(*Signed*) Pedro **Núñez Mosquera**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 21 October 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Final Declaration of the Seventh Forum of Cuban Civil Society against the Embargo

20 October 2010

The 139 organizations of Cuban civil society and regional and international organizations with headquarters in Cuba, meeting in Havana on 20 October 2010, at the Seventh Forum of Cuban Civil Society against the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo by the United States against the Cuban People, following the positions adopted at previous Forums and having deliberated on the current state of the situation reported on at them, have agreed to state the following:

1. On 28 October 2009, the United Nations General Assembly adopted by 187 votes in favour resolution 64/6 entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", which urges the Government of the United States of America to lift the embargo imposed unilaterally by the authorities of that country against the Cuban people, which has been in effect now for almost 50 years.

2. The Seventh Forum reaffirms the view expressed in the Final Declaration of the Sixth Forum that "the embargo against Cuba is the most prolonged, cruel and unjust ever known in the history of humanity, and represents a veritable economic war which qualifies as an act of genocide. Its fundamental declared objective has been to destroy Cuba's constitutional order, depriving its people of sovereignty and of the exercise of their right to self-determination."

3. This ongoing policy of the history of the empire's acts of aggression against the Cuban nation has failed in terms of its objectives aimed at conquering the Cuban people through hunger and disease. Nevertheless, the United States Government continues to allocate every year millions to ensure the strictest implementation of all the measures and laws that constitute the embargo and to organize internal subversion. Through the massive information and communication media subsidized by its agencies, it unleashes a media war that presents a totally distorted image of the Cuban reality, thereby intervening in our country's internal affairs, which constitutes a violation of the inalienable right of the Cuban people to their self-determination, independence and sovereignty and to adopt the economic, political and social system that best serves their interests, as reflected in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the main international instruments governing relations between nations.

4. The opposition, both international and within the United States, to the unilateral coercive measures against Cuba has continued to grow during the last year. Nevertheless, at the beginning of September 2010 President Barack Obama extended by one more year the sanctions against Cuba pursuant to the powers accorded to him under the Trading with the Enemy Act, which forms the basis for the other laws and regulations that make up the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. This action has even been reinforced by the recent inclusion of our country in 2010 on the arbitrary "black list" of countries that support or

promote terrorist activities. These actions contrast with the statements made by the United States President himself during his electoral campaign that he would introduce changes in relations with Cuba and are in disregard of the prerogatives of the President of the United States to introduce substantive changes in this policy even without submitting them for approval by the Congress.

5. The extraterritorial nature of the embargo has not only been maintained, but has been reinforced in the past year. These unilateral sanctions against Cuba, which have a widespread effect outside the territory of the United States on companies and citizens of third countries in violation of international law, have been tightened, particularly in their application to the banking and financial sector.

6. The embargo constitutes a gross, massive and systematic violation of human rights which continues to be applied to our country with utter impunity. It violates:

- The right of our citizens to development, because the embargo has already caused losses to the Cuban economy over the past 50 years amounting to more than US$ 750 billion in current United States dollars. If the embargo did not exist, those resources could have been invested in projects for the sustainable socio-economic development of our nation;

- The right to health, since it prevents the purchase of medicines and medical equipment produced only in the United States or by subsidiaries of United States companies located in another country, and including companies of another nationality that produce them under licence, a situation that poses a risk to the lives of Cuban citizens. Cuba is obliged to acquire medicines, reagents, spare parts for medical equipment, instruments and other products in distant markets and, on many occasions, through intermediaries, which entails an increase in costs;

- The right to food, as purchases of food products from United States companies are subject to onerous and difficult conditions for Cuba. The Government of the United States continues to block those purchases and no action has been taken to conduct such sales in accordance with the rules, channels and regular practices of international trade;

- The right to education and culture, which translates, among other things, into daily shortages that affect the process of learning, research and scientific work of students and teachers, generally at all teaching levels, since it is impossible to acquire media, products and equipment in the United States market, and imposes regulations that hamper academic and scientific exchange and Cuba's access to the Internet and to new information and communication technologies.

7. The embargo not only affects the Cuban people but also violates the constitutional rights of the people of the United States by depriving them of their freedom to travel to Cuba and exposes those who choose to visit the island to severe fines and terms of imprisonment.

8. The Seventh Forum appeals to the States Members of the United Nations to support once more the draft resolution submitted by the Government of Cuba in the General Assembly as an indication of their concern and commitment in the struggle to have the embargo lifted. It also urges them to adopt practical steps to

prevent the application to their territories of United States laws and regulations that violate their own sovereignty and the principles of free trade.

9. The Seventh Forum also calls upon the President of the United States to use his broad powers to reduce or eliminate prohibitions imposed by the set of laws and regulations that make up the illegal embargo against Cuba and to exclude Cuba from the so-called list of State sponsors of international terrorism, since it is not only an arbitrary measure and an absurd policy but also provides yet another pretext for the application of the embargo.

10. The organizations of Cuban civil society and the regional and international organizations with headquarters in Cuba participating in the Seventh Forum acknowledge and thank the broad and effective solidarity shown towards our country by thousands of civil-society organizations around the world, including those in the United States, and we highly esteem their solidarity in the struggle to end the unjust and immoral policy being applied by the United States Government against our people. We appeal to them to make public their support for the draft resolution submitted by the Cuban Government, which will be considered by the General Assembly on 26 October 2010 for the nineteenth time, under the title "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", and to redouble their efforts at the national and international level, including by sending letters to the President of the United States demanding that these unilateral coercive measures be lifted.